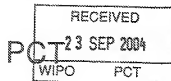


PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

From the
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

To:

see form PCT/ISA/220



WRITTEN OPINION OF THE INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY (PCT Rule 43bis.1)

Date of mailing
(day/month/year) see form PCT/ISA/210, (second sheet)

Applicant's or agent's file reference
see form PCT/ISA/220

FOR FURTHER ACTION
See paragraph 2 below

International application No.
PCT/GB2004/002740

International filing date (day/month/year)
24.06.2004

Priority date (day/month/year)
24.06.2003

International Patent Classification (IPC) or both national classification and IPC
A61G7/10, A61F15/00

Applicant
PIKE, Anthony Bruce

1. This opinion contains indications relating to the following items:

- ☒ Box No. I Basis of the opinion
- ☒ Box No. II Priority
- ☒ Box No. III Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
- ☐ Box No. IV Lack of unity of invention
- ☒ Box No. V Reasoned statement under Rule 43bis.1(a)(i) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
- ☐ Box No. VI Certain documents cited
- ☒ Box No. VII Certain defects in the international application
- ☒ Box No. VIII Certain observations on the international application

2. FURTHER ACTION

If a demand for international preliminary examination is made, this opinion will usually be considered to be a written opinion of the International Preliminary Examining Authority ("IPEA"). However, this does not apply where the applicant chooses an Authority other than this one to be the IPEA and the chosen IPEA has notified the international Bureau under Rule 66.1b(b) that written opinions of this International Searching Authority will not be so considered.

If this opinion is, as provided above, considered to be a written opinion of the IPEA, the applicant is invited to submit to the IPEA a written reply together, where appropriate, with amendments, before the expiration of three months from the date of mailing of Form PCT/ISA/220 or before the expiration of 22 months from the priority date, whichever expires later.

For further options, see Form PCT/ISA/220.

3. For further details, see notes to Form PCT/ISA/220.

Name and mailing address of the ISA:



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WRITTEN OPINION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

International application No.
PCT/GB2004/002740

Box No. 1 Basis of the opinion

1. With regard to the language, this opinion has been established on the basis of the international application in the language in which it was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.
 - ☐ This opinion has been established on the basis of a translation from the original language into the following language , which is the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international search (under Rules 12.3 and 23.1(b)).
2. With regard to any nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence disclosed in the international application and necessary to the claimed invention, this opinion has been established on the basis of:
 - a. type of material:
 - ☐ a sequence listing
 - ☐ table(s) related to the sequence listing
 - b. format of material:
 - ☐ in written format
 - ☐ in computer readable form
 - c. time of filing/furnishing:
 - ☐ contained in the international application as filed.
 - ☐ filed together with the international application in computer readable form.
 - ☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority for the purposes of search.
3. ☐ In addition, in the case that more than one version or copy of a sequence listing and/or table relating thereto has been filed or furnished, the required statements that the information in the subsequent or additional copies is identical to that in the application as filed or does not go beyond the application as filed, as appropriate, were furnished.
4. Additional comments:

WRITTEN OPINION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

International application No.
PCT/GB2004/002740

Box No. II Priority

1. ☒ The following document has not been furnished:

- ☒ copy of the earlier application whose priority has been claimed (Rule 43*bis*.1 and 66.7(a)).
- ☐ translation of the earlier application whose priority has been claimed (Rule 43*bis*.1 and 66.7(b)).

Consequently it has not been possible to consider the validity of the priority claim. This opinion has nevertheless been established on the assumption that the relevant date is the claimed priority date.

2. ☐ This opinion has been established as if no priority had been claimed due to the fact that the priority claim has been found invalid (Rules 43*bis*.1 and 64.1). Thus for the purposes of this opinion, the international filing date indicated above is considered to be the relevant date.
3. Additional observations, if necessary:

WRITTEN OPINION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

International application No.
PCT/GB2004/002740

Box No. III Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability

The questions whether the claimed invention appears to be novel, to involve an inventive step (to be non obvious), or to be industrially applicable have not been examined in respect of:

- ☐ the entire international application,
☒ claims Nos. 10

because:

- ☐ the said international application, or the said claims Nos. relate to the following subject matter which does not require an international preliminary examination (*specify*):
- ☐ the description, claims or drawings (*indicate particular elements below*) or said claims Nos. are so unclear that no meaningful opinion could be formed (*specify*):
- ☐ the claims, or said claims Nos. are so inadequately supported by the description that no meaningful opinion could be formed.
- ☒ no international search report has been established for the whole application or for said claims Nos. 10
- ☐ the nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence listing does not comply with the standard provided for in Annex C of the Administrative Instructions in that:
- the written form ☐ has not been furnished
- ☐ does not comply with the standard
- the computer readable form ☐ has not been furnished
- ☐ does not comply with the standard
- ☐ the tables related to the nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence listing, if in computer readable form only, do not comply with the technical requirements provided for in Annex C-bis of the Administrative Instructions.
- ☐ See separate sheet for further details

**WRITTEN OPINION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY**

International application No.
PCT/GB2004/002740

Box No. V Reasoned statement under Rule 43bis.1(a)(i) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. Statement

Novelty (N)	Yes: Claims	1-9
	No: Claims	
Inventive step (IS)	Yes: Claims	
	No: Claims	1-9
Industrial applicability (IA)	Yes: Claims	1-9
	No: Claims	

2. Citations and explanations

see separate sheet

Box No. VII Certain defects in the international application

The following defects in the form or contents of the international application have been noted:

see separate sheet

Box No. VIII Certain observations on the international application

The following observations on the clarity of the claims, description, and drawings or on the question whether the claims are fully supported by the description, are made:

see separate sheet

Re Item III

Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability

- 1 Claim 10 rely on references to the description and drawings. According to Rule 6.2 (a) PCT this claim is not allowable.

Re Item V

Reasoned statement with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

- 2 Reference is made to the following documents:

D1: US-A-4 051 565 (BERGE TRYGVE) 4 October 1977 (1977-10-04)
D2: EP-A-0 966 892 (SIEWERT RONALD R) 29 December 1999 (1999-12-29)
D3: US-A-3 648 291 (PANKERS ALVA L) 14 March 1972 (1972-03-14)

- 3 The present application does not meet the criteria of Article 33(1) PCT.

- 3.1 In the description (page 1, lines 24 - 29) a material fulfilling the conditions of friction disclosed in claim 1 is described as a known and commercialized product. Therefore, a sheet of this known material would have all the technical features of claim 1 rendering it not novel.
- 3.2 Document D1 discloses a medical protection sheeting formed from Teflon (column 3, lines 36 - 47, figure 1) and having therefore a coefficient of static friction substantially the same as its coefficient of dynamic friction.

Therefore the subject-matter of claim 1 is not new in the sense of Article 33(2) PCT.

- 3.3 Dependent claims 2 to 9 do not contain any features which, in combination with the features of any claim to which they refer, meet the requirements of the PCT in respect of novelty or inventive step, the reasons being as follows:

Novelty:

D1, column 3, lines 36 - 47, figure 1; for claims 2 and 3

Inventive step:

D2, paragraphs 1, 48 and 49; figures 1 - 15; for claims 2 and 3
D3, the whole document; for claims 8 and 9

In claims 4 to 7 a slight constructional changes in the medical protection sheeting of claim 1 is defined which comes within the scope of the customary practice followed by persons skilled in the art, especially as the advantages thus achieved can readily be foreseen. Consequently, the subject-matter of claims 4 to also lacks an inventive step.

Re Item VII

Certain defects in the international application

- 4 Independent claims are not in the two-part form in accordance with Rule 6.3(b) PCT, which in the present case would be appropriate, with those features known in combination from the prior art (document D1) being placed in the preamble (Rule 6.3(b)(i) PCT) and with the remaining features being included in the characterising part (Rule 6.3(b)(ii) PCT).
- 5 Contrary to the requirements of Rule 5.1(a)(ii) PCT, the relevant background art disclosed in the document D1 is not mentioned in the description, nor is this document identified therein.
- 6 The features of the claims are not provided with reference signs placed in parentheses (Rule 6.2(b) PCT).

Re Item VIII

Certain observations on the international application

- 7 Claim 1 is not supported by the description as required by Article 6 PCT, as its scope is broader than justified by the description and drawings. See page 1, lines 1 - 34 and figure 5.